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# Episode Transcript

Sonja van Rossen & Lexy Bourne, *Hosts*

# Episode 24: "Q&A with Dr. Gregory Lockwood on 1 Corinthians 11 - Headcoverings and Headship"

Dr. Gregory Lockwood is an emeritus professor who has worked at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and at the Australian Lutheran College in Adelaide. He has also served as a parish pastor and as a missionary in Papua New Guinea. His commentary on 1st Corinthians was published by Concordia Publishing House in August, 2000. He currently lives in Adelaide with his wife, Christine.

**Tuesday, 7th May, 2024**

**Sonja:** Welcome to our very first Q&A. The topic of this Q&A is going to be 1 Corinthians 11. 1 Corinthians is a fascinating book of the Bible that covers many topics, but one that has come up a lot lately is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 11 and that is the topic of headship and head coverings. In our culture, this topic can often be very confusing and countercultural. We have actually asked listeners to send in some questions on the topic and we're eager to hear more on the topic. Our guest for today's Q&A is Dr. Gregory Lockwood from Adelaide. Dr. Lockwood was associate professor at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and he also served as

professor at the Australian Lutheran College in Adelaide, as a parish pastor, and as a missionary in Papua New Guinea. He has also written a commentary on 1st Corinthians, which has been published and distributed worldwide by Concordia Publishing house. So welcome here, Dr. Lockwood. You're actually the first man we've had on our podcast!

**Dr. Lockwood:** Thank you. It's good to be with you, in a sense, in your home again. You used to be next door neighbour to my brother-in-law.

**Sonja:** Yes, it was so lovely having you guys pop in and it's great to have you here as well, Lexy.

**Lexy:** Thank you and welcome, Dr. Lockwood. So to begin with, we'll start with just a very easy question, and it has to do with the commentary that you wrote on 1 Corinthians. What type of work is involved with writing a commentary, and how long did it take you?

**Dr. Lockwood:** Well, it took me from 1993 when I was first invited to do the commentary to 2000 when it was published, so seven years overall. And the type of work? Dr. Just, who was a colleague in the New Testament in Fort Wayne, recommended to me that I choose the best commentaries I could find. The two that I worked with most were by Gordon Fee, who was a moderate Pentecostal, and then later on, Richard Hays. Those were the two I used the most. I would consult seven, eight or even more from time to time. The big thing always was to evaluate them in the light of the original Greek and see what you agreed with and what you didn't agree with. I also had opportunities for teaching elective classes. One class I remember best was with Pastor Darrin Kohrt, who became pastor at Concordia, Loxton for some years and died not long ago. Darrin Kohrt and Bishop Juhana Pohjola from the mission diocese in Finland. He was in Australia recently and he reminded me that he'd been in my class on 1 Corinthians. I had a lovely visit with him. Sometimes I would have other classes, and the person I had related to most in the process was Dr. Christopher Mitchell of Concordia Publishing House. Chris was just really great to work with and we were communicating on a weekly basis, sometimes more than once a week about this and about that.

**Lexy:** Why did you choose 1 Corinthians?

**Dr. Lockwood:** I didn't choose it. Dr. John Grothe had been my doctor father and my main supervisor when I did my doctoral studies in St. Louis. He invited me to do it. I'm glad I did, because it's such an interesting book that covers so many topics that are highly relevant to the church today.

**Sonja:** So is your commentary the only one on 1 Corinthians written with a Lutheran hermeneutic or perspective? Or are there other Lutheran commentaries as well?

**Dr. Lockwood:** There have been, Sonja. Some of them are quite a bit older. One would definitely be Richard Lenski from the old Ohio synod in America, but that would be quite old. That goes back to the 1920s, I think. That's another reason that attracted me to this, there hadn't been any in recent times. I'd have to check my bookshelf and see what else I have. I think a professor at the Lutheran seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota did one as well.

**Lexy:** So yours is currently the most recent commentary on 1 Corinthians from a Lutheran perspective?

**Dr. Lockwood:** From a Lutheran source, as far as I know.

**Lexy:** Shall we jump into the questions that our listeners have sent in?

Let's read the passage to start off.

**Dr. Lockwood:** Starting from 1 Corinthians 11:2...
*Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you. 3 But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife...*

There's a footnote. It could be the "head of a woman."

*...is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, since it is the same as if her head were shaven. For if a wife will not cover her head, then she should cut her hair short. But since it is disgraceful for a wife to cut off her hair or shave her head, let her cover her head. For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God. Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair it is a disgrace for him, but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering. If anyone is inclined to be contentious, we have no such practice, nor do the churches of God.*

**Lexy:** So the first question for today's Q&A is: "Was woman created in the image of God as man was, or in the image of man?"

**Dr. Lockwood:** I think the answer is both. In Genesis 1:26-27 in the creation of Adam and Eve:

*Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens*...etc., etc.

*So God created man in his own image,*
*in the image of God he created him;*
*male and female he created them.*

So the answer in the first place is a very definite yes. Yes, the woman was created in the image of God. But then the woman, because she's created second, she is a reflection of Adam. She's taken from Adam's rib. Martin Luther always referred to his wife Katie as 'Kitty my rib'. That's what Paul is saying here in 1 Corinthians 11. In that derived sense, the woman has derived her image from her man. She's derived her being in the image of God from her husband.

**Lexy:** My husband recently read that verse and the beautiful poetry that Adam recites when he sees his beautiful wife: *You are bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh* [Genesis 2:23]. That's just me paraphrasing, but it really is such a beautiful passage about Eve's

creation coming from Adam's rib. Just one of my comments. It is quite beautiful.

**Dr. Lockwood:** Yes. Dr. Renner, my Hebrew teacher, never married, and so it was rather precious coming from him. He said, "The Hebrew word for man is *ish* and the word for a woman *ishah*. So when Adam first saw Eve, he said, "ahhh"!

**Lexy:** That's funny.

**Dr. Lockwood:** There's a passage in my commentary, too; a quote from some source: 'Blessed Lucilla, the glory of Sophronius'. Something like that. This woman is the glory of Sophronius. So you've got that word glory coming into 1 Corinthians 11 with regard to the woman being in the image and being the glory of her husband.

**Lexy:** That was actually the next question. It was: "What does it mean, 'but a woman is the glory of man.' What does it mean to be our husband's glory?"

**Dr. Lockwood:** For other parallels, see 1 Thessalonians 2:20 - *you are our glory*. That *you* is plural.
That's a good question. I haven't answered it in detail in my commentary, but I think when a young man finds his bride-to-be, he starts to live a little bit more happily and gloriously. That way he gets a spring in his step, etc. She brings glory to him. She brings honour to him because he has found such a person to share his life with.

**Sonja:** So a bit like she brings out the best in him.

**Dr. Gregory Lockwood:** Yes.

**Lexy:** It reminds me very much of Proverbs 31 when it says *her husband is known in the gates when he sits among the elders of the land* [Proverbs 31:23]. The sense that she is bringing, I suppose, honour to his name. She is bringing him good, not harm.

**Dr. Lockwood:** Yes. She's helping the family to flourish and receive honour in the gate. I have a very good example of someone who brings glory sitting not far away from me right now.
In those days, a single man was nothing.

**Lexy:** Okay, so in a nutshell, us women, we're very good for men. Or we should be!

**Dr. Lockwood:** Undoubtedly!

**Lexy:** Now a lot of the questions that our listeners sent in have to do with hermeneutics; interpreting these passages, especially in regards to cultural things and what's happening in the culture and how our culture is different today. So one of the first questions relating to hermeneutics is:

"Are these commands about head coverings and other matters just cultural? Such as: Christians at the time didn't want to offend their neighbours?"

**Dr. Lockwood:** Could we look at that in its parts, beginning with commands about head coverings? My commentary comes out with the thought, or the fairly strong interpretation at that point is, that the head coverings are actually a shawl or a wrap-around. Now studying it, and as a result of your interviewing me, it's led me to have a fresh look at things. I went back to the Greek dictionary and that actually, and I notice too, that a lot of commentators don't talk about shawls and wrap-arounds. They

talk about veils. And that's the first meaning given when you get *kephale*, the Greek word for head. *Kephale* plus the genitive means a veil. Now, I would broaden that to say, in the case of men in those days, it was the Roman toga that a man of stature would wear. Let's see if I can find the examples here on page 360 [of his 1 Corinthians commentary]. There are two very interesting examples given in the book of Esther. You've got that poor man, Haman. He returns to his home with his head covered. Right? So he can't show his head. But not only can he not show his head, he can't show his face. He was just so embarrassed. Gordon Fee comments by quoting Plutarch, the Roman historian. In Plutarch's account of Scipio, who was a Roman general: Scipio the Younger, beginning to walk through Alexandria (on the north coast of Africa) having his cloak or his robe down the head.
In other words, he covered his head, including his face, with part of his toga, to avoid being recognised by the people. So he didn't want them to see his head, but he didn't want them to see his face either, because he was very embarrassed.

**Lexy:** So the covering and veiling of his face was due to embarrassment and shame?

**Dr. Lockwood:** That's right. And in our culture, too, the woman is the glory, and her uncovered face, if you like, is the glory that brings great joy to her husband. But hasn't it been traditional that at the wedding, when she's putting on her bridal dress, she wears a veil over her face? I don't know if it's still the case, but it used to be years ago.
I guess what I'm saying here is that I'm not sure that this really applies to hats. That's the question. I think it's applying more to a veil that would cover the head, but it also covers the face. Whether a woman's hat really covers what's meant here would be a question.

**Sonja:** So you're saying that when it mentions head covering in 1 Corinthians 11, it might not just be something on top of the head. It could be something that also veils the face?

**Dr. Lockwood:** I just gave those examples from the Haman story and from Scipio. Look, when I prepared the commentary, I was under some time pressure, too, to get it done. I must say that I was really struck today when I opened up the dictionary and blow me down! It's right there at the beginning of the preposition *kata*. It's *kata* with the genitive - *kata kephale*. It says wearing a veil. It says that it's the very first entry under that preposition.

**Lexy:** I do know that amongst women who have chosen to cover their heads, there is even discussion about what actually constitutes as head covering. I know that in some groups, the head covering looks like lace that goes on the back of the head. In others the head covering is more like a bonnet, and then there are some where it's like a shawl that goes over the head. You can even see head coverings in other cultures where their neck and their ears are covered as well.

**Dr. Lockwood:** I think what's helpful, and I understand that in our culture too, my wife Christine, she grew up in the day when women always wore a hat in public. You dressed up for a special occasion with a church or country women's association or whatever. The women always wore a hat. Now, that may have had Christian roots, but today that's not the case. It's not the custom anymore. Different women will find different ways in this matter. But I like 1

Peter 3:3, beginning at 3:1: *Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct. Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands.*

I think that's our main concern. And this applies to men, too. To have a gentle and quiet spirit.

**Lexy:** Yes, because that's talked about in James. He talks about the Christian having the quiet and gentle spirit; not being argumentative [James 3:17].

**Dr. Gregory Lockwood:** That's right, and not wearing showy dress.

**Lexy:** We do express ourselves very much in how we dress, and there have been times where I have dressed in a particular way, and my motives for dressing that way have not been good. I think it really is relevant because, you know, we don't want to be known for what we wear or our shoes or our hats. As Christian women, we should be known for our character and for our obedience to the Lord and loving our husbands and families and whatever vocation the Lord has put us in. That's what we should be known for, not for our shoes or our hats.

**Dr. Lockwood:** Well said.

**Lexy:** So the next question steps away from the topic of head coverings, just for a moment, and asks about interpreting the Bible: "So how do we interpret the Bible? Does culture change the way we view it? How do we interpret cultural things in the Bible? Do we follow them or do we disregard them?"

**Dr. Lockwood:** Yes, this is a very important question. I'll begin by speaking of the rule that Martin Luther gave for interpreting and reading the Bible. You may be familiar with that three step process: *oratio meditatio, tentatio*. *Oratio* meant prayer; *meditatio*, meditation, but not any kind of meditation, but meditation specifically on the words of the Bible. Your prayer, too, going back to that, because this is the Holy Spirit's book. The Spirit is the author of this book. So our prayer is specifically to the Holy Spirit, asking Him to help us understand what's there in the Scriptures, then to meditate on that, and then the last step is testing. *Tentatio* is testing. To be sure, Luther says testing will follow the hardships of life and they will send us back to the first step, back to prayer, then to meditation on Scripture. Then that cycle goes on through our lives. I think that's where we begin with interpreting the Bible.

Martin Chemnitz, who was the great successor to Martin Luther, he's been called the second Martin. In his great book on the Lord's Supper, he says that when it comes to the Lord's Supper, we need to follow the simple, proper and natural meaning of the text. You can say the *literal* meaning of the text. He repeats this over and over in his book on the Lord's Supper, *the simple, proper and natural meaning of the text.* I think that's so helpful. Don't try to read between the lines or under the lines or around the lines.

Martin Chemnitz found fault with Zwingli in Switzerland for saying "this signifies my body" instead of "this is my body." You're familiar with those issues.

Then the other big thing is a Christ-centred approach. The main person in the Bible is our Lord Jesus Christ. The Old Testament speaks about the coming Christ, the Christ who is to come and the New Testament - the Christ who has come. So the Old Testament people were saved by the same faith that we are saved by today. That leads us to have a high appreciation of the Old Testament. Some Christians can't stomach or can't handle the Old Testament, but if we see it as a testimony to Christ, you search the Scriptures and *these are they that testify to me,* Jesus says in John 5 [John 5:39].

**Lexy:** I always used to struggle with the Old Testament until I became Lutheran. It just seemed to be so different and disconnected from the New Testament. But when you make Christ the centre of it all, you can see that Christ refers to the Old Testament a lot, the apostles refer to it a lot. When you actually go back and read what they're referencing, it reveals more about Christ or the Father. Without the Old Testament, we can't understand Christ as much.

**Sonja:** It helps to read the Old Testament and the New Testament as one whole story. I used to kind of separate it as, "That's one story and now there's a new story." In a way, the Old Covenant and New Covenant are [different]. It is just one story, it's about Jesus and the story of Jesus.

**Dr. Lockwood:** Exactly.

**Lexy:** How does culture come into all of this and how does culture change the way that we view the Bible?

**Dr. Lockwood:** Does culture change the way we view it? The Scriptures have come to us through the Hebrew and Greek languages, interpreted into English then for us, and generally well translated in our different versions. So that's a culture if you like. It comes to us through a Middle Eastern culture, Hebrew, and also through the Greek culture that Alexander the Great spread everywhere with his armies that came from Macedonia. So just the languages themselves bring us into that culture, into that Hebrew culture, into that Greek culture. How do we interpret the cultural things in the Bible? Follow them or disregard them? Yes. That involves many issues. One thing that's become a bit of a stumbling block for some Christians is the idea that the Bible, the Old Testament, brings us an out of date cosmology - out of date worldview of the creation of the world. Something that's outmoded and supposed to have come from the Babylonians who thought the firmament was like some sort of disc up there in the sky. We need to recognise that the Bible actually does not bring us cosmology, as such. I like the word phenomenological. The Bible, when it speaks about the creation, always speaks as we observe it and as it appears to us. We see the sun rise and the sun set, and *the sun runs his course like a strong man runs his race with joy* [Psalm 19:5], even though it doesn't move. That sort of thing can put people off reading the Bible if they think that it's got an outdated, false cosmology and that can affect people's attitude right from Genesis 1. If they think that's mistaken, it's not.

**Lexy:** Just going back to what you said about the way that the Bible describes what we see. You can see that when God creates the sun and the moon, He says that the moon was *the lesser light to govern the night* [Genesis 1:16]. Well, we know that the moon doesn't actually produce its own light, it's simply reflecting the sun's light. But when you look up at the night sky and you look up at the moon, it's a light!

Did you have anything else that you would like to say about interpreting cultural things in the Bible?

**Dr. Lockwood:** Yes, in connection with head coverings, which is the issue here. You've got the principle and the custom. So for example, in John 13, the principle is the new commandment that we love one another. The custom was that we wash one another's feet. That was a custom in those days and in that culture when people wore sandals and walked on dusty roads. But for many cultures today, we wear socks and shoes and we walk on decent footpaths and so forth, that [foot washing] no longer applies. And the word used in John 13:15, Jesus says, "*I've given you an example*" - that means I've given you a model, I've given you a pattern. That word is *hypodeigma*.
In other cultures when you arrive at a house, for example in some parts of Papua New Guinea, we lived there for quite a few years - when you arrive at a house, the courteous and hospitable thing was to offer betel nut. Or if they're very thirsty on the coast, you offer them kulau, coconut water, to drink. Very refreshing.
In America when you arrive at a home, the first thing we had to learn when we lived there was that when guests arrived in your home, you were supposed to help them take off their coats and find a place to deposit their coats. So different cultures have different customs, but you're always expressing love.

**Sonja:** In our culture, it might be offering them tea or coffee.

**Lexy:** Yes. Do you see head coverings as the custom, but there is the underlying principle of headship?

**Dr. Lockwood:** Yes. The principle comes through very clearly in what we read earlier from 1 Peter 3. The principle is that a woman's dress should be modest and tasteful, etc., not showy.

**Sonja:** In the culture that we currently live in, there is no such thing as modest or immodest or a certain way to dress, how do we dress modestly then?

**Dr. Lockwood:** I'd have to leave that to you women to answer. But I think a pastor teaching confirmation class with both boys and girls, if he can do so, or parents at least, should teach their girls to dress modestly and not have huge cleavage showing. If I can be that specific. So when the pastor is distributing Communion, he's not distracted by that sort of thing.

**Sonja:** Maybe modesty is something that we ask the Holy Spirit to show us what would be modest in our situation? Or maybe we can ask our husbands?

**Dr. Lockwood:** That's right. Exactly.

**Sonja:** There's no formula for it.

**Dr. Lockwood:** That's true.

**Lexy:** Just going back to the concept of principle and custom, I know that I've

certainly struggled with this before. It's working out which one's which. I have seen arguments where they will take a principle like headship within marriage, and they'll say, "Oh, that's just a custom. Now that we're in the 21st century, that old-fashioned custom doesn't apply to us anymore." Do you have any advice on how we can interpret the difference between a principle and a custom?

**Dr. Lockwood:** Yes, I think in that case, if someone is saying that headship is just a custom, I think there's too much Scripture saying that this is God's order - His order of creation for men and women everywhere. One of the things, perhaps, unfortunately, when women's ordination has been discussed here in Australia, we have a good little statement on it in our Theses of Agreement. It simply speaks about the apostolic injunction [VI: Theses on the Office of the Ministry, Article 11]. We know that that's in 1 Corinthians 14 [1 Corinthians 14:34-35] and we know it's in 1 Timothy 2 [1 Timothy 2:11-12], where the women are to be silent and the men are to be the heads of the Christian family and under Christ in the Christian church. But to restrict it to 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2 is too narrow. That's why it's important that we have a good look, as we're doing now. At 1 Corinthians 11 - that's where Paul's discussion of it all begins, and that's very clearly set out in that order, isn't it?
The head of every man is Christ... now are they going to dispute that and say that's just a custom? You can't dispute that the head of every man is Christ. Christ is the head of every Christian, and that includes every man. The head of the woman is her husband or the man...that's the contentious bit, isn't it? So people are not consistent. Okay, the first part's okay, the head of every man is Christ. And then the last part - the head of Christ is God. You can't dispute that; you really can't! It's God the Father, and Jesus is God from God, light from light, true God from true God. And the Bible consistently says the Father sent the Son into the world. So while Jesus and the Father are one, Jesus in John 10 says *I and the Father are one* [John 10:30]. In chapter 14, Jesus says *the Father is greater than I* [John 14:28]. So they are one, but the Father is greater. It's the Father who sends the Son into the world; it's not the Son who sends the Father into the world.
So you monkey around, if I could put it that way, with one part at the beginning of chapter 11. You can't really do that.
It's not demeaning either. It's not demeaning for a woman to be subject to her husband if the husband is loving you, *as Christ died for the church* [Ephesians 5:25]. You can't look at these things in isolation from Ephesians 5, the great marriage text, which talks there, too, about headship. So you start getting rid of headship as a mere custom, you're cutting the scissors to a fair part of the Bible, and you've got a passage in Colossians [Colossians 3:18-19], similarly, 1 Peter [1 Peter 3:1-5], same thing.

**Sonja:** We've been listening to a commentary on YouTube by Mike Winger and he's been talking about the subject of headship. He says that there are people who then go that step further and say that even the headship of Jesus doesn't mean headship as an authority. So I think if you start saying that the man's headship does not include authority, then you have to work backwards and, and say, "Well, when it talks about Jesus having headship and that it also doesn't mean authority." It seems like you've got to do either/or. Either it means authority and headship, it can include source and source of love and that stuff, but it also includes

authority, or you have to say, "Yes, it doesn't include any of that.'

**Dr. Lockwood:** Another way of looking at it in reverse is if you say that if it's demeaning for a woman to be subject to her husband, then it's demeaning for the man to be subject to Christ and for Christ to be subject to the Father. It doesn't work.

**Sonja:** In our culture, it is demeaning for a man to be subject. It's very popular to be your own man and to be the author of your own destiny and be in control of your life. And in this Western culture, it's very much demeaning to have anyone above you or telling you what to do. So I suppose saying it's demeaning for a wife to be under her husband just follows along those same lines.

**Dr. Lockwood:** Yes, yes, exactly. And that's a big theme in 1 Corinthians; the egoism, the individualism. Right from chapter one in 1 Corinthians, "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am...I, I, I [1 Corinthians 1:12]."

**Lexy:** If you say that it is demeaning for a woman to be in subordination to her husband, then because it is also connected with Christ obeying the Father (the Scriptures teach us that He obeyed the Father even unto death [Philippians 2:8]), that is actually touching on the foundation of our faith; the Gospel. So was it demeaning for Christ to obey the Father and to die, which is our redemption?

**Dr. Lockwood:** Well said.

**Lexy:** There is another thing that I haven't written into the questions, but I would love to know your thoughts on it.
Quite often, when it comes to interpreting passages like 1 Corinthians 11, people will often bring up cultural differences, sometimes in a way to nullify what the verse is saying. But very rarely do we actually look at the cultural similarities. So for example, I have been reading through the Apology [Apology to the Augsburg Confession] and in one part Melanchthon talks about pastors who are preaching philosophers from the pulpit. I said to my husband, "We have that problem today. So many pastors are preaching either the newest idea or a philosophy or this book that's just been released, rather than from the Bible itself." So that's a cultural thing that hasn't changed. And I've also recently read through Acts when Paul is debating with the Epicureans and the Stoics in Athens [Acts 17:18]. I had no idea who those groups were, so I looked them up and I thought, "Wow, this is very much our culture."
I would just love to know what you think about this. There is a lot of emphasis on cultural differences and often it's to try and nullify what the Word is saying. But there are so many cultural similarities back then and also today. So I think the cultural argument, even when it comes to things like headship, we can't say that it is just a cultural thing because their culture was so different to ours. Well, were our cultures really that different?

**Dr. Lockwood:** It's interesting you bring up the Stoics and Epicureans. Paul was very much aware of the Stoics, of course, and some of the slogans in 1 Corinthians, *all things are lawful for me* [1 Corinthians 6:12], that's what some of the Stoics were saying. And then the Epicureans, they come up in chapter 15. Their philosophy was "let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die, which comes up in 1 Corinthians 15 [1 Corinthians 15:32].

The best word for Stoicism would be autonomy or self-sufficiency. That was one of their big themes; self-sufficiency, which is *autokaia* in Greek - you're sufficient to yourself.
Epicureanism doesn't mean that you necessarily go for a life of pleasure, but you always consider what's going to bring you the most happiness. In the long run, you know, "What's going to make me happy?"

**Lexy:** Yes, I was just going to say, the few notes that I wrote down was that for Epicureanism, that the ultimate goal of life is happiness. So whatever you do, whatever you seek, is to bring you happiness. Wow, we see so much of that in our culture today.

**Sonja:** We've got people now calling themselves sovereign citizens. You know, "I can do whatever I want, and I can be whoever I want, and you can't tell me any different."

**Dr. Lockwood:** Well said. The book of Romans deals with this, too and it says that what happens then is that you fall into sin. Inevitably, you fall into graver and graver sins. Romans 6 is the great baptismal chapter and it begins with what our baptism means, and it means newness of life, etc. Paul is really addressing Epicureanism in that chapter and says sin will not be your king. And then in Romans 6:14, *sin will not be your lord*. So in that context, you could put a capital s on Sin. Sin can become people's king and can become their lord. I love the little saying from Luther with regard to temptations and sin. Luther is quoting some old church father or some old monk or something like that, and he says, *you can't stop the birds flying over your head* - you can't stop temptation coming your way - *but you can stop the birds from building their nests in your hair*. I think that's very true. We're to fight against sin in the power of the Holy Spirit every day and not let sin become our king and our lord.

**Lexy:** Yes, absolutely. The next question has a lot to do with what we've been talking about. It says: How do we know when we are putting our own desires in the way when we interpret the Bible?

**Dr. Lockwood:** My first thought is the Ten Commandments tell us. It's basically through the Ten Commandments that we are warned against following our own desires. James warns, too, against letting your temptations be conceived and become full blown sin and so on [James 1:15]. But I think mainly the Commandments, because they are 'The Great Guide'.
One of Luther's associates, Johann Agricola, became an antinomian [anti-law]. He said that the law should not be part of our sermons; it should not be part of our teaching; the law belongs in the courthouse and it does not belong in the church. That caused Luther a lot of distress. That's what Paul responds to, too. That whenever the gospel is preached, as it is so clearly in Romans and elsewhere, people can draw the false conclusion and say, "Okay, I can do lots of sinning and I'll have all the more grace. *Let sin abound so that grace may even more abound* [Romans 6:1]. That sort of attitude is something that human beings often form.

**Lexy:** Yes. One thing that I've learned, as a woman reading through some of these passages, is that my pain and my fear are not very good at interpreting the Bible, especially when it comes to things like submitting to your husband. If my fear interpreted that passage it would be, "You can't do that. It can't really be saying that. You could get hurt. Your husband is not perfect and he could do

something that you disagree with and think of what could happen to you," and things like that. If I let my fear interpret that passage, I would probably just chuck it away and say, "Obviously it can't mean that. Submit must mean something else."

**Sonja:** But rather we follow the The First Commandment that says fear, love and trust God [Exodus 20:3]. When He says that, it's actually what's best for us.

**Dr. Lockwood:** Yes, fear, love and trust in God above all things.

**Lexy:** Yes, and I do think that as women, we sometimes fall into the trap of letting our fear interpret the Bible for us.

**Dr. Lockwood:** I think we can all do that. And sometimes the desire to be popular can be a great danger too, rather than pleasing Christ above all.

**Lexy:** Yes, absolutely.

**Dr. Lockwood:** That reminds me of one thing that I could have perhaps mentioned earlier. That is that the Bible was written in such a way that it can be understood across all languages. That's the great beauty of the Bible, it's not restricted. God knows how to speak His Word in a way that's understandable across all languages and all cultures.

**Lexy:** The next question has got to do with what women are biblically allowed to do in the church. I know that different synods have different statements on what women can and can't do. Some of our listeners are from different synods in Australia. We've also got listeners from synods in America. We're just happy for you to answer it according to what you believe the Bible says.
**Dr. Lockwood:** Sure, Lexy. We'll take them in order: Does male headship as given in Scripture allow for women to take upfront or leading roles in the church?

Reading from the lectern...
Yes, I don't personally have a problem with that. I think reading and preaching are two very different things. You're reading what is set for you to read from the Scriptures. It's not preaching or leading prayers. I don't have a problem with that.
The pastor is called to give leadership in worship and I don't think it's good when a congregation, such as we've experienced in one or two places, has women doing almost everything and the pastor hardly does a thing. I don't think that gives a healthy picture.

Assisting with Holy Communion...
Sure, in principle, I don't have a problem with that. As long as the pastor is the one who basically takes the liturgy of Holy Communion, not just the words of institution, but everything that belongs to the liturgy around it. Now, some of it belongs to the congregation too, doesn't it? Some of it's sung by the congregation, such as *Christ, the Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world*. Then after communion, the beautiful *Song of Simeon*. We sing that as a congregation and so the congregation plays its part. I have occasionally received Communion from the hand of a woman, but never as a presiding woman. That's the role of the pastor, I believe.

Lay reading, including reading sermons written by pastors...
We have an example going back to the 1840s in Australia. Pastor Fritscher came in 1841. He was a very fine pastor, but he had to look

after a congregation in Hahndorf and a congregation at Bethany and the Barossa and so on. He couldn't be in every place, because it was quite a long walk, the tracks weren't too good, and he didn't have a horse. He used to authorise a woman to read the sermon, because they lacked men who were sufficiently literate to do the reading. They were peasant farmers, so they couldn't. The women were literate.
Sometimes we find, too, in our congregations, that some women are excellent readers. I think the main thing is that the reading is well done and clear.

Leading Bible studies...
In a women's group, a women's fellowship or conference, or whatever it might be, a woman may certainly lead a Bible study. I'm not so comfortable if there's a lot of men present, especially if there's a lot of pastors present.

Committees...
Yes.

Pastoral assistants...
Sometimes we've had women being pastoral assistants, but they are called elders. It doesn't go quite so well with that name. Pastoral assistant fits better with that. Could I just comment, though? One of the big dangers today is that you have some very outside spoken people saying, "We don't need pastors anymore. We're short of pastors and we don't need them anymore." Now, having pastors is essential to the church. Jesus is the Good Shepherd, the Good Pastor. At the end of John's gospel, he says to Simon Peter, *feed my sheep, feed my lambs* [John 21:15-17]. In other words, be a pastor to my sheep and my lambs. 1 Peter 5:2, *shepherd the flock of God* and so forth. And Paul and Barnabas from their first missionary journey in Acts 14:23, they appointed elders in every place. Now *elder* in New Testament terminology is synonymous with being a pastor. It's not an elder in our sense, with the elder being an assistant and then sometimes an advisor to a pastor. But in the New Testament, the elder means pastor. It's the Greek word from which we get *presbyter*. You've got four different words for elder/pastor. You've got pastor, *poimen*, meaning a shepherd. You've got elder, *presbuteros*. Most of the pastors in the New Testament were older men. Timothy was an exception. The other one is *episkopos*, meaning an overseer. I'm not in principle against having bishops. My big concern is that we never forget that the word bishop, *episkopos,* applies to every pastor. Every pastor is an episkopos; it's essential. In Acts 20, Paul calls the pastors together. He doesn't call together the prophets, etc. He calls together the pastors. The first big pastors conference is in Acts 20.

Women teaching...
You get Priscilla and Aquila. Priscilla is often mentioned first because she was so good at teaching and she gave private teaching to Apollos. Was it Apollos?

**Lexy:** Yes.

**Dr. Lockwood:** And so women can teach other women. That's in the pastoral letters; that the women are to teach other women, as you are assisting in doing too, and private teaching. But public teaching, you've got that text in 1 Corinthians 14:23, when the whole church comes together and you've got men, women and children. That public teaching with exposition and applying of the Word, that should be the responsibility of the men.

**Lexy:** I know that some people consider lay reading a type of preaching, and so therefore, in some synods, only men are to be lay

readers. Even though you're reading someone else's sermon, some see that as you standing in place of the pastor.

So we've got four questions left...

If a young girl decided she wanted to cover her head because she was convinced of Scripture, how should she approach this with her parents?

**Dr. Lockwood:** Yes. In view of what I said earlier, I would want to change it from head to face. If the young girl decides she wants to cover her face, because I think that's basically what Paul's talking about here. For me, it's an adiaphora, it's not a basic theological issue. Christine and our daughters and granddaughters, when they go to church, don't cover their heads and I don't think you and Sonja do either. We all need to make our own conscientious decisions in things like this.

**Sonja:** I sort of understood it, especially in the cultural sense, to be something that married women did especially. Would you say that makes a difference whether you're married or not married?

**Dr. Lockwood:** I think you're right there. It's to do with how a married or mature woman appeared in public. There's nothing specifically about girls and their dress out in public. I'm not aware of anything at all, whether in the New Testament itself or in other literature from that period. I'd be surprised if I found things that said girls out in the public were having to cover their heads.

[To Christine, his wife] When did you start to wear hats, Christine? How old were you? Christine is saying it was in confirmation in her time.

**Sonja:** I suppose in Bible times, if we're talking about culture, a girl probably was considered someone who wasn't married. By the time you're a woman, you're married. So that's slightly different in our culture too, probably.

**Lexy:** Yes, and I suppose that a young girl still living at home with her parents is to honour her parents. If her parents say, "No, you're not wearing a head covering to church," then she is to honour that. And if they say, "Yes, you can if you want," then do you see anything wrong with her wearing a head covering to church?

**Dr. Lockwood:** No, I wouldn't. I certainly as a pastor would not make an issue of it. Yes, I think that's probably all I have on that one.

**Lexy:** The next question...

How do we respond when someone accuses the Bible of patriarchal power structures?

**Dr. Lockwood:** One of the very fraught issues these days, isn't it? Patriarchy is a loaded word and it's been made into a bad word. And power structures? It's unfortunate too that so often the push for women's ordination is seen as empowering women, as if being a pastor is not a matter of a ministry of service. It's basically of service, not being powerful; being authorised to serve other people in this way. I think that the whole language is wrong from a biblical point of view. God is the father, isn't He? God is the Father. He's a God who is love. He's not a God who delights in oppressing us with His power. Behind a lot of this is cultural Marxism. I'm starting to see it in the newspapers, too. The Australian newspaper,

for example - we get a number of good writers there and they complain about all the cultural Marxism in our society. So we see men as oppressors, women as the oppressed, and that's Marxism. Marxism is always dividing people up into those two groups, the oppressors and the oppressed. It all belongs to that language. And it's feminist ideology. It's got nothing to do with the Bible, really. It's just feminism.

**Sonja:** The husband, even though he is the one in authority and the head of the relationship, he's still called to serve and to live self-sacrificially. Those two things are not mutually exclusive.

**Dr. Lockwood:** Exactly. One word that I think is rather important, and I've become more conscious of it recently, is that as the head, the father in the family is a *protector* of the family. To understand in those terms, the word protector is not a loaded term in the same way patriarchy has been treated. The husband is there to protect his wife. There's also in 1 Peter 3 it says that the woman is the *weaker vessel*. I think that primarily means that she is physically weaker, and so she needs protection. Now, it's not so obvious today when a woman can drive a car and all that sort of thing. With all our modern technology, she can do many things that only men could do in the past. I think a pastor needs to be protective of his own family and protective of the flock.

**Lexy:** When it comes to people accusing the Bible of patriarchal power structures, the conversation seems to go around the thought that only patriarchal structures have the control, the power, and they oppress alone those underneath them. I grew up in a denomination that did ordain women. Women had a lot of power and a lot of influence in the church. There were very power-hungry women.

**Dr. Lockwood:** Yes, I often think in this connection that original sin is an equal opportunity employer. He can employ men, but he can also employ women to be oppressive.

**Sonja:** The word patriarchy is often very closely associated with abuse. You can't say one without people going, "Oh, but abuse!" Then we think, "Well, because one equals the other, we immediately need to throw the whole thing out." And then we very quickly get to the whole, "Well, let's just throw authority structures in general out. Then we can avoid abuse, and all forms of abuse will then be nullified."

**Dr. Lockwood:** And it can so easily filter down to the next generation, to the children, too. That the children don't respect adults or authority.

**Lexy:** We've got two questions left. The next two questions are from the same listener. She asks...

Your commentary talks very comprehensively of Saint Paul's reasons for a woman to cover her head, and it nods to the historic practice within the church. You tie a woman's covering to her participation in church, both what she should and shouldn't do. How important is head covering in the church?

**Dr. Lockwood:** Yes, Lexy. I think we've basically covered that under [practical application] number one - *does male headship allow women to take upfront or leading roles in the church?*

I think I gave a view there. I don't know what I would add. My main concern would be that the pastor is called, and here in Australia at

least, and I'm sure in America too, that the pastor's responsibility, as set out in the letter of call, is to take a leading role in the conduct of worship in the congregation. And if we assume or accept that the pastors should be men, then they should have oversight of what happens in worship and take chief responsibility for that. But the women will always have a part. I don't believe it's necessary.

**Lexy:** And the last question...

You talk at some length about head covering and how it establishes a woman's place not only in the orders of creation but also in worship and what a woman should or shouldn't do. Saint Paul gives us reasons for the head covering, namely the orders of creation and the angels, and seems to put a great deal of weight on the practice. You also mention how important it is to confess the order of creation, especially in today's confused society. Can you explain how a woman's covering confesses that order of or is it merely something we are being given to do rather than to fully understand?

**Dr. Lockwood:** I knew a woman years ago in the church where I grew up in Victoria, who always wore a hat to church. But for one thing, I don't see Saint Paul necessarily talking about hats at all, as I've explained. Something we've been given to do rather than to fully understand? I think we are given to understand that in that culture, as with the foot washings, the principle is that we love one another. This is the new commandment that Jesus gives us. And in connection with the culture of that day in Palestine; during that day people washed each other's feet. It was a courtesy that you did when people arrived in a place, in a home, etc. But whether in our culture it means wearing hats today, I just don't see that myself.

[To Christine, his wife] Do you want to add something?

**Lexy:** Hello, Dr. Christine Lockwood.

**Christine Lockwood:** I always understood that in those days, covering your head was a cultural thing that showed respect to your husband and so forth. And so Christian women should, in worship, show that same respect. But in our culture, it doesn't have that meaning if our heads aren't covered, it's not a disrespectful thing. This is how I've understood it, that we don't need to cover our heads. We're not showing disrespect, but at the same time, our dress needs to be modest.
In Papua New Guinea, we were quite used to women showing their breasts. Culturally, it was perfectly acceptable. It didn't bother me that women came into church with their breasts uncovered in the very early days. I think that in worship, we need to dress in a way that is modest and respectable according to the rules of the culture. In New Testament times, a woman covering her head was a sign of being respectful and modest in her dress. But today, it doesn't have that meaning. And so I think we need to dress in a way that's modest and respectful when we worship according to the rules of the culture. Whatever the culture understands is respectful, modest dress. And I don't think that we have to cover our face in order to show, or cover our heads to show that we are modest and respectful in our dress.

**Dr. Lockwood:** Thank you, Dear. That was excellent. This reminds me of how Paul ends Ephesians 5 with the roles of men and women in the Christian home. Ephesians

5:33 - *However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.* As Christine was saying, that's the key thing.

**Sonja:** We can fully understand the core message of the 1 Corinthians 11 passage about headship. We can fully understand that because the concept appears many, many times throughout the whole Bible.

We actually did have a couple of men email in as well. If we understood what they were trying to say, husbands also need to do their bit and show humility.
I think women often are very quick to say, "Well, you know, I need to submit, but the husband needs to do this, this, this, and this." So what do you think is an appropriate response to the whole concept of what men should do? Is it appropriate for us to tell our husbands what the Bible says in regards to how they should act? Or should we just worry about how we act?

**Dr. Lockwood:** Well, I think in any good marriage, the main thing is you can't change your spouse. Your spouse will always be your spouse. The main person to work on is always yourself, whether you're the husband or the wife. The woman subordinating herself to her husband and being his helper is her gift to him.
There's even more asked from the man. In Ephesians, there are three verses addressed to the woman and eight verses addressed to the men. They had to love their wives. Eight verses for us men to *love your wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her. Love your wife as your own body* and all that sort of thing. There's always so much we can do to help our wives in all sorts of little and big ways.

**Sonja:** So what you're saying is we should work on ourselves and leave the rest up to God?

**Dr. Lockwood:** Yes, that's a good way of putting it.

**Lexy:** Thank you so much for joining us today on our very first Q&A episode.

**Dr. Lockwood:** It's been quite a delight. Thanks, Lexy and Sonja. God bless you both.